



Outside ptarmigans were pecking at sawdust. And the windowsill was covered with dirt.

The window was foggy and there was hardly room for her amongst bowls of festering fruit, piles of newspaper and dead flowers. She pushed piles with her feet until she came upon a conch.

She picked it up peering into one end and then the other. Before turning the small end to her lips and blowing it.

She couldn't make any sound at first.

So she tried again and a small hum whispered out of the conch's end.

A faint pattering of steps was heard from outside the window.

So she tried again and this time a long howl sounded through the room. It bounced off the walls and filled the room, with each bounce the sound got louder and louder and travelled further and further.

The sounds echoed round and round the room, the sound getting louder and louder. Even when she stopped the sound kept growing.

And the pattering of steps grew louder until it pounded toward her and a pack appeared in the distance. Bounding toward the window at a frightening pace.

She jumps off and backs to the opposite wall as they crash through the glass and 'circle and twist' around her.

A pack of wolves has joined her. The presence of wolves where she lived was uncommon, but not altogether unnatural. However, wolves were not known to burst through windows at the sound of a conch.

She put this to the wolves.

The pack paused their circling, stopping to look at her. One wolf stepped forward, it was grey with thick fur, flecked with white and slightly larger than the rest of the pack. It put one paw in front of the other and bowed its head in her direction.

The rest of the pack followed suit, placing one paw in front of the other, they bowed their whole bodies until they were lying on the ground in expression of obedience.

And from that moment on the wolves followed her wherever she went, like a pack of tame dogs.

At first she feared the wolves, always carrying a knife wherever she went, lest the wolves switched allegiance and attacked her. But she soon began to trust their unwavering loyalty and grew comfortable with their constant presence.

Walking with wolves had its difficulties, people tended to avoid her. They would cross the street as she walked towards them. Naturally people were afraid of the wolves. She tried to explain that the wolves were safe, tame and that they wouldn't harm anyone. But people wouldn't listen.

Resultantly she grew up in isolation, with only the wolves for company.

This frustrated her and sometimes she would get angry and scream at the wolves and yell for them to go away.

But they didn't listen, they only bowed and followed her more pitifully than before.

Some warned her of the dangers of living with wolves. Her mother told her that they were wild animals, she should be careful. When she showed the wolves obedience, her mother would repeat, but they are wild animals.

Frustrated by her mother's cries and saddened by her exclusion from society, she retreated into isolation. She and the wolves lived in a cabin in the woods.

Together they would sit and watch the moon and hunt for small animals. Soon she forgot that they were wolves and thought of them as her friends.

She spent all her time with them, she soon stopped sleeping in her bed, preferring to curl in a ball amongst them.

She stopped eating at the table, instead she crouched around the food with the rest of the pack.

She stopped bathing and she let her hair and her fingernails grow long and thick.

She forgot her language and communicated only with grunts and growls.

And one day she was walking about when she tripped over something, she looked down and it was the conch. And she remembered how she had come to be with the wolves. She looked at her arms and they were bleeding. She looked up and saw the wolves encircling her.

And the glint in their eyes told her she should run.

But by that point it was too late.